

THE CONSEQUENCES OF RAPE AND SEXUAL  
ASSAULT FOR THE FEMALE VICTIM:  
VICTIMS' PERCEPTION

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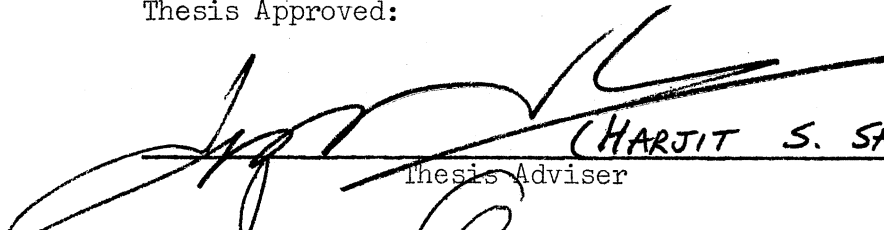
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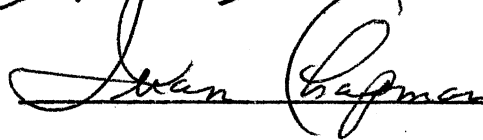
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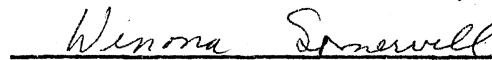


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## PREFACE

This study investigated females who were raped or sexually assaulted, to discover if they suffered from any social or psychological disabilities as a consequence of the sexual attack. Special attention was focused on stigma, although other affects were of interest as well.

The author wishes to express her appreciation to her major adviser, Dr. Harjit Sandhu, for his guidance and assistance throughout this study. Appreciation is also expressed to the other committee members, Dr. Winona Somerville and Dr. Ivan Chapman, for their encouragement and assistance in the preparation of the final manuscript. The author must gratefully acknowledge the active cooperation of all the respondents who agreed to share some of their painful experiences. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

A special word of thanks is given to my husband, Richard, whose encouragement and criticisms were invaluable. This thesis would not have been the same without his remarks.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### The Problem

The abuse suffered by the rape victim does not always stop at the hands of the rapist. Far too often the rape itself is only a part of a traumatic encounter with degradation and injustice. The stereotypes, myths, and insensitivity of family, friends, and society as a whole, form the foundation for stigmatizing the victim. A great deal has been written about the offender's stigmatization, now we look at the victim. It is especially tragic when the victim, someone not responsible for the crime, suffers from stigmatization.

To discover if a victim of sexual abuse was stigmatized, all we need do is ask her a few questions. If the victim was stigmatized, she would necessarily know it. The stigmatized individual is always aware of the stigma.

In many circles sexual abuse is still a subject to be discussed secretly. Why do people shun the abused female? If they do not understand her situation, it is because they do not know it. Hopefully, this thesis will add to the understanding of victims and stigma, how some females are sexually abused, and what some of the consequences of that abuse are. Not all victims in this study were stigmatized, but far too many were.

## Definitions

### Stigma

Stigma is a complex concept. It is too broad to be summarized into a single sentence. Hopefully the following paragraphs will make the concept clear as it is intended to be used in this study.

Stigma is a strike against a person's character which disassociates him from his community. Stigma is always unflattering and disdainful.

Erving Goffman (1963) distinguishes three types of stigma:

Three grossly different types of stigma may be mentioned. First there are abominations of the body—the various physical deformities. Next there are blemished of individual character perceived as weak will, domineering or unnatural passions. Finally there are the tribal stigma of race, nation, and religion (p. 4).

The sexually abused female falls into the stigma category of the blemished character—the only category not visible to the naked eye. This study does not intend to exhaust the definitions of all kinds of stigma, only the blemished character will be discussed.

Stigma of the blemished character is the result of behavior deemed inappropriate. A norm, an expected pattern of behavior or implicit social rule, must have been broken. The reaction of other people to that broken norm produces the stigma. If people criticize, condemn, avoid or label the victim, stigma results. If people understand, sympathize and support the victim, there is little or no stigma, even if a norm is broken. If stigma occurs, it will be through the reaction of other people. The sting of stigma results in apprehension, anxiety and other negative feelings on the part of the stigmatized. The stigmatized individual always suffers.

According to the people who tend to stigmatize, the sexually abused female may have broken one of the norms listed below. According to these norms, only an assault by a total stranger is a legitimate crime. In order for the victim to be considered really innocent, she must not have communicated with the assailant prior to the assault. A conversation, smile or other friendly gesture deems her partially at fault.

Our society seems to entertain several notions about what females should not do to protect themselves from a sexual attack. Some of those notions heard by the researcher in conversations are given below.

1. Do not accept rides from strangers
2. Do not let a stranger into your home
3. Do not go into a male's apartment unless you are prepared to have sex with him
4. Do not begin sexual activity and then stop—it frustrates the male
5. Do not wear sexy clothing
6. Do not go to "wild" places or "wild" parties
7. Do not date a male unless you know him well
8. Do not drink or take drugs—especially with males
9. Do not discuss sex with males—it raises their expectations
10. Do not date indiscriminately—it develops a bad reputation

Existing myths of rape have an influence on people's attitudes and beliefs which in turn, affect their action to stigmatize others. Myths have nothing to do with truth or falsehood but with beliefs. People hold several myths about rape, some of which were heard by the researcher are given below.

1. There is no such thing as rape
2. Women are masochistic and really want to be raped
3. The more a female is domineering, the more she wants to be domineered
4. Women fantasize and dream of being raped
5. Rape is often an afterthought—she decides she has been raped if she thinks it over
6. Might as well relax and enjoy it
7. Religious women suffer more
8. Rape can be romantic
9. If a woman really did not want to be raped, she could have

prevented it

10. In life threatening situations, more adrenalin runs through the blood stream, turning a female into "super-woman" who can fight against those far stronger than herself
11. Women can claim to be raped to win certain advantages—to threaten an innocent male, etc.
12. Women lie more often than men

Originally, the intention of this study was to study rape victims exclusively, but later on this was broadened to include other victims of sexual abuse, child molestation and attempted rapes. The terms are defined below.

#### Rape

Rape is sexual intercourse without the consent of the female. The contact of genitals is enough to constitute intercourse.

#### Other Sexually Abusive Acts

Other abusive acts include sodomy, cunnilingus, fellatio and the insertion of foreign objects into the vagina. Humiliation other than rape is included here.

#### Child Molestation

Fondling a child 12 years old or younger is considered child molestation. The child's consent does not mitigate the offender.

#### Attempted Rape

The sexual intentions of the male were known, but the female was able to escape the sexual attack. Overt sexual actions were made by the assailant to deem it an attempted rape.

### Importance of this Research

Rape is largely a hidden crime. Many females do not report sexual abuses inflicted on them to the police. The actual number of rapes and other abuses are not known.

Rape is probably the crime most under-reported to the police (MacDonald, 1974, p. 26).

Reported figures come nowhere near representing the total (Spielmann, 1974, pp. 9-10).

According to the FBI, forcible rape is one of the most under-reported crimes due primarily to fear and/or embarrassment on the part of the victim, and one in five rapes, or possibly one in twenty, are actually reported (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 190).

Some females are so apprehensive of other people's reaction that they keep such experiences a secret, not daring to tell even their friends or family.

One study of college women found that fully half of the 291 students responding had, during the academic year, been subjected to male sexual aggression which they defined as offensive. The same study found that none of these incidents were reported even when violence was present (Schultz, 1975, p. 114).

Only a few studies have been conducted directly with rape victims. Whatever information can be gathered about them, would be of help in understanding the problems involved.

Victims of sexual abuse touch lives other than their own. They are wives, mothers and citizens with spheres of influence to match these different roles. Her problems have consequences for other people. Even if she does not tell anyone of the abuse she suffered, her fears and prejudices resulting from that experience will become known through her behavior. If she is depressed, anxious or fearful, those near to her will know. The victim's life is interconnected with her family, friends

and larger community. If she does not answer her door or help a stranger, she adds to a hostile, paranoid society. This study has not resolved the inconsistencies.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

#### Stigma

Stigma has been extensively discussed by Erving Goffman (1963) in his book on Stigma. The quotes given below explain what it means to be stigmatized.

Stigma is the situation of the individual who is disqualified from full social acceptance (Preface).

He (the stigmatized individual) is different from others, less desirable. He is reduced in our mind from a whole and usual person, to a tainted, discounted one (p. 3).

Those who have dealings with him fail to give him the respect and regard which the uncontaminated aspects of his social identity have led him to expect receiving from these others (pp. 8-9).

Normals (those not stigmatized) believe the person with the stigma is not quite human. They exercise a variety of discrimination and reduce his life chances. They construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority. They tend to impute a wide range of imperfections on the basis of the original one (p. 5).

Note that stigma is a process by which other people act upon an individual: "reduced in our mind"—other people who are free from stigma, in the mind of these others; "disqualified"—being rejected by others. Stigma necessarily includes a response from other people.

Garfinkel (1956) describes what he calls a successful degradation ceremony. It is a public change of an individual's identity.

Any communicative work between persons, whereby the public identity of an actor is transformed into something looked on as lower in the local scheme of social types will be called a status degradation ceremony. The identities referred to must be total identities. That is, these identities must refer to persons as motivational types, what the group holds to be the ultimate grounds or reasons for his performance. Degradation ceremonies fall within the scope of the sociology of moral indignation. The paradigm of moral indignation is a public denunciation. We publicly deliver the curse: 'I call upon all men to bear witness that he is not as he appears but is otherwise and in essence of a lower species' (p. 68).

Garfinkel emphasizes the total identity of an individual being destroyed—destroyed by other people. This is comparable to stigma. Other people have the power to force identity changes.

Tannenbaum (1938) also describes a situation comparable to stigma. One particular act or situation can degrade the entire person and all that he or she does.

There is a gradual shift from the definition of the specific acts as evil to a definition of the individual as evil, so that all (her) acts come to be looked upon with suspicion. Reputation is a public definition (p. 18).

Again, the stress is on the public and their opinion of an individual.

Becker (1963) adds a significant point so far not mentioned by these others. Two people can do the same thing without the same consequences. One is punished, the other is not—one is stigmatized, the other is supported. It is not the act alone which produces stigma but only if and when other people choose to respond in that manner. He states that

(Deviance) depends on how other people react to it and on who commits the act and who feels he has been harmed by it. Rules tend to be applied more to some persons than others (and that it) depends on the consequences the act entails. (A stigma) is a label placed on a person by some segment of society (p. 15).

All the above quotes accent the public response, not the individual's deed or emotional reaction. Stigma is not a property of the act or actor, but how people look upon a certain act or actor.



## Discriminatory Reaction to Breaking of Norms

Stigma is the result of other people disapproving of the victim's behavior. The victim broke a norm—she did something she was not supposed to do. It should be noted that some people may feel that certain behavior is appropriate or not appropriate for other people not including themselves. As Goffman (1963) describes it, "members of a social category may strongly support a standard of judgement which does not apply to them (p. 6)." In this vein, men have rules for women, adults have rules for children and somehow society dictates rules for relations between the sexes.

The norm expressed in the two quotes given below makes all victims vulnerable to stigmatization.

Sex is only permissible for a woman if she loves the man and is married to him (Schultz, 1975, p. 121).

The double standard, out-of-date as it is, and perhaps always was, still lives. By this strange theory, sex outside of or before marriage is fine for men but not for women (Storaska, 1975, p. 114).

No matter what the circumstances of the assault, forcible rape or not, the female broke the above norm. The female is guilty of having sexual relations outside of marriage.

If a female is abused on a date, she is responsible because she is suppose to control sexual activity. At some point she failed to act properly. "Women are supposed to accept the responsibility for how far these (sex) relations will proceed (Schultz, 1975, p. 109)." "Males and females have different responsibilities on dates. Your behavior will have an effect on him and you should take responsibility for it (Storaska, 1975, p. 113)." "You should do whatever you do while being aware of the possible consequences (Storaksa, p. 121)."

Women are not supposed to "tease" men. If they do, unwittingly or not, they become partially guilty of the crime committed against them. The female's behavior, at any time, can be considered a prelude to the assault if she makes herself appear as someone who has had a lot of sexual experience and/or would not mind having more. Women are not supposed to have numerous sex partners. Women are not supposed to discuss sex with men. "An atmosphere of sexual permissiveness real or not tends to raise a man's expectations (Storaska, 1975, p. 114)."

"Some men seem to believe that when a woman teases, or they think she does which is usually the case, all the normal social rules no longer apply, that they then have the right to take whatever they want (p. 176)." "Some females deficient in socialization in male subculture, unwittingly engage in provocative behavior (Schultz, 1975, p. 118)."

"Women indirectly tease men whenever they do anything in public view that might lead others to believe they've had or they're having sex with someone (Storaska, 1975, p. 118)." "Under no circumstances should you hitchhike (p. 176)."

If a female is abused while hitchhiking, she will find little or no support from others because she should never have been in that vulnerable position to begin with. "What did she expect" or "she was asking for it" are often the opinion of other people. If she would have behaved properly, the abuse would never have had a chance to occur. "A virtuous woman either cannot get raped or does not get into situations that leave her open to assault (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 433)."

Females are taught that males may desire them purely for sexual reasons. Also, they know that most males are physically stronger than they are. Since it is the female who is vulnerable in a male-female

encounter, she must decide if a situation is safe. Risk is involved, for she may have judged incorrectly. Our culture has warned females to beware of males with bad intentions.

Blame (is placed) on women for having innocently participated in dangerous situations. If a woman goes drinking with a man her accusation of rape is weakened since by drinking she took a chance, made herself vulnerable, and also introduced an element of stimulation for the male. If she allows a man to come to her house, or if she goes to his, she is either indicating a willingness to have sexual intercourse or showing her readiness to assume the risk of attack. (This is the assumption of the risk doctrine (Cornell & Wilson, 1974, pp. 145-6).

It is easy to see why so many victims are met with criticism and eventually stigmatization. The victim's behavior is matched against an ideal. She is bound to fall short of this image.

A woman could not remain blameless under such an analysis unless she lived in a constant state of fear that every man she encountered was a potential rapist (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 146).

#### Definition of Rape

One problem for the victims is the disparity between the legal definition and the social definition of sexual assault. For the victim, no other proof of the assault is required beyond the experience. Legally, evidence is needed to prosecute an assailant. Since obtaining that evidence may be emotionally disturbing to impossible to produce, many legitimate victims do not prosecute.

Rape is a felony. Each state has their own legal definition. There are three perspectives that can be used in defining rape: common law, statutory law, and social definitions.

### Common Law

This perspective stems from England. It is based on what occurred in previous trials.

(Rape is) the unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman over the age of ten years, forcibly and without her consent, or as otherwise expressed, by force or forcibly, and against her will, or such knowledge of a female child under the age of ten years, either with or without her consent (Corpus Juris, 1952, p. 461).

Corroboration is needed for three specific parts of the rape victim's testimony:

- 1-identification, that the man accused is the rapist
  - 2-penetration, that intercourse or its attempt occurred
  - 3-lack of consent, that the intercourse was not a voluntary act on the part of the woman
- (Cormnell & Wilson, 1975, p. 126).

### Statutory Law

As defined in the Model Penal Code: Section 213.1—Rape.

A man who has sexual intercourse with a female not his wife is guilty of rape if:

- a-he compels her to submit by force or by threat of imminent death, serious bodily injury, or by extreme pain or kidnapping, to be inflicted on anyone; or
  - b-he has substantially impaired her power to appraise or control her conduct by administering intoxicants or other means for the purpose of preventing resistance; or
  - c-the female is unconscious; or
  - d-the female is less than ten years old
- (Kerper, 1972, p. 129—Criminal Justice Monograph, pp. 5-6).

Oklahoma Statutes—1971

Rape is an act of sexual intercourse accomplished with a female, not the wife of the perpetrator, under either of the following circumstance:

- 1-under 16 years
- 2-over 16 but under 18, chaste and virtuous
- 3-incapable through lunacy, temporary or permanent (unsound mind)
- 4-resistance overcome by force or violence
- 5-threats of immediate and great bodily harm
- 6-intoxicating narcotic
- 7-unconscious of the nature of the act
- 8-believes it to be her husband

Slight penetration is sufficient to complete the crime. Rape

in the 1st and 2nd Degree:

Rape committed by a male over 18 years of age upon a female under 14 years, or incapable through lunacy, force overcoming her resistance, threats accompanied by apparent execution. This is rape in the 1st degree, all others are rape in the 2nd degree.

Punishment for 1st degree rape: death or imprisonment in the penitentiary not less than 5 years. Punishment for 2nd degree rape: not less than 1 year, not more than 15 years.

### Social Definitions

A female definition of rape can be contained in a single sentence. If a woman chooses not to have intercourse with a specific man and the man chooses to proceed against her will, that is the criminal act of rape (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 8).

Rape is any sexual intimacy forced on one person by another. Rape differs from acceptable sexual relations in one, and only one, concrete way. One person is unwilling and is therefore forced (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 12).

It is deemed a rape only if the assailant is a violent stranger, if the victim reports the rape immediately after it occurred, and if she can provide evidence of the attack and of her active resistance (Schultz, 1975, p. 91).

There is confusion between the definition of rape as a prosecutable crime and rape which occurs as a natural result of the social and sexual conditioning in our society (Criminal Justice Monograph, 1976, p. 5).

Some rapes are prosecutable, others are not. The victim's occupation, relationship to the assailant or criminal record may be the factor which determines the assault to be non-prosecutable by the police or D.A.

If the victim was a prostitute or the assailant was her boyfriend, there is little chance of conviction because of predictable community attitudes. These are labeled in the police department as non-prosecutable (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1975, p. 48).

The woman who reports a sexual attack by a friend or acquaintance is even more likely to be distrusted by police. In a situation such as this the victim may be viewed by the police as the precipitator of the crime (Criminal Justice Monograph, 1976, p. 15).

If the rape did not correspond to the preconceived idea of a classical rape or legal rape, the victim may not define the situation as rape. Her response may be slow or inappropriate. She may not realize that she was raped. "Many women do not see themselves as rape victims, especially if they were not subject to much violence or if their rapist was someone with whom they were acquainted" (Kasinsky, 1975, p. 88).

In the stereotypic conception of rape, rapists are supposed to be strangers. When the rapist is known to her, this widely held expectation contributes to her difficulty or inability to define the act as rape before, during and after the event and accounts in part for her ineffectual and often inappropriate response to his behavior (Schultz, 1975, p. 107).

### Myths

Myths have nothing to do with truth or falsity, but with belief. Some myths found in the literature are given below.

All women want to be raped  
 No woman can be raped against her will  
 She was asking for it  
 If you are going to be raped, you might as well relax and  
 enjoy it  
 (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 346).

It is believed that rape must be horrifying and anyone experiencing such an act would respond severely. The victim's response must match the horror of the crime.

No woman, according to the myths of our society, could actually go through a rape without coming close to insanity. It is, after all, a fate worse than death. If you seem calm, you are unlikely to be believed, whatever that calmness may cost you in emotional energy (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 118).

Another myth is women are more likely to lie than men. This concept is as old as the Bible.

The cry of rape and the rape lie (has) a history. Potiphar's wife (from the Old Testament) had been a liar who maliciously

cried rape. Thomas Jefferson had warned of those women who might cry rape as an instrument of vengeance. That Bible of American jurisprudence, Wigmore on Evidence, required reading for students in law school, cautioned against the female's tendency to lie (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 251).

Eric Berne (1964) feels that a woman could play a vicious life game involving a false cry of rape. The man is viewed as the victim.

Third-Degree Rape is a vicious game. Here White leads Black into compromising physical contact and then claims that he has made a criminal assault or has done her irreparable damage. In its most cynical form White may actually allow him to complete the sexual act so that she gets that enjoyment before confronting him. The confrontation may be immediate, as in the illegitimate cry of rape. If she chooses to play it as a criminal assault, she may have no difficulty in finding mercenary or morbidly interested allies, such as the press, the police, counselors and relatives (p. 126).

Not only do psychologists and Bible stories warn us of the female tendency to lie, but facts as well. The police statistics report a high percentage of unfounded cases of rape. "On the national average, police say that 15% of all rape cases reported to them turn out on cursory investigation to be unfounded--in other words, they didn't believe the complainant (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 190)." " . . . 15% of reported rapes are labeled unfounded (Criminal Justice Monograph, 1976, p. 24)." "About 18% of all alleged forcible rapes every year are determined upon investigation to be falsely claimed (Storaska, 1975, p. 212)."

Brownmiller (1975) feels that the rate of unfounded rape is high because men are judging women. She believes that women are more understanding of other women and less likely to assume that women lie about being raped.

When New York City created a special Rape Analysis Squad commanded by policewomen, the female police officers found that only 2 percent of all rape complaints were false--about the same false-report rate that is usual for other kinds of felonies (Brownmiller, p. 410).

The unfounded rate of 4.4% is the rate of reports the police normally assume (Drapkin & Vinal, 1974, p. 169).

There is also the common belief that many accusations of rape are false. We have not found this to be true in the majority of cases seen at the Rape Crisis Intervention Program at Beth Israel Hospital, nor have others in this field with whom we have spoken (Notman & Nadelson, 1976, p. 231).

Another myth believed by many people has to do with life threatening situations. It is believed that at such a time, a person can gather miraculous strength, fighting those much stronger than herself, due to an increased supply of adrenalin. It follows that if a rape is a "fate worse than death" the female will have this additional adrenalin and she will be able to fight her aggressor even if he is normally stronger than she is. Fear will transform her into "superwoman." Burgess & Holstrom (1976) found most rape victims viewing the assault as life threatening. "Most of the victims perceived the rape as a life threatening situation. Those who didn't, saw it as frightening, stressful and degrading (p. 44)." Burgess & Holstrom interviewed 92 rape victims to determine the coping behavior they used at the time of the assault. In two-thirds of the cases the victims used some kind of positive strategy—the remaining third was characterized by lack of strategies. Here is the list of tactics used by the victims in their study:

- Cognitive Assessment—assessing the situation, possible alternatives
- Verbal Tactics
  - talking one's way out of the situation
  - stalling for time
  - reasoning with the assailant
  - try to gain sympathy
  - using flattery
  - bargaining with the assailant
  - feigning illness
  - threatening the assailant
  - verbal aggression



changing the assailant's perception of the victim  
 joking and sarcasm  
 Physical Action  
   fleeing  
   fighting  
 Lack of Strategies  
   physically paralyzed  
   weapon  
   stunned or surprised  
   blanked out  
   alcohol or drugs (p. 47).

In life threatening situations some people become paralyzed and immobile, even if it means their death. In the animal kingdom fighting is not the most natural response to such a situation. "The animal reacts to threats to his existence either with rage and attack or with fear and flight. In fact, flight seems to be the more frequent form of reaction (Erich Fromm, 1973, p. 119)."

If women are believed to be liars, if they tease and provoke men, if they take unnecessary chances, if they are sexually permissive, if they do not fight, was it rape? There will be no support for the victim but the reverse and probably stigmatization.

#### Statistical Comparison

The following information is compiled from several sources: Medea and Thompson, Spielmann, Amir, Brownmiller or Storaska. As the reader will notice, there is a wide range of statistics and the authors greatly differ in their information.

#### Race of the Victim

95%	White	(Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 83)
93%	White	(Spielmann, 1974, p. 108)
80.5%	Black	(Amir, 1971, p. 94)

The race of the victim is listed first because it affects the rest of

the information collected about those victims. Amir's study is greatly different from the others. His data was collected in a predominantly black area which accounts for his intra-racial rape. His study is based upon forcible rape cases reported to the police in Philadelphia in the years of 1958 and 1960. Spielmann quotes information obtained by women who answered a survey anonymously, printed in "Viva" magazine. The 93% white response more than likely reflects the Viva reading public rather than the general population of rape victims. The research of this study has 76% white victims.

#### Gang Rape

The authors differ on their findings of rape with more than one offender. This thesis found 16% of the assaults were gang rapes.

43%	(Amir, 1971, p. 198)
9%	(Spielmann, 1974, p. 105)
10%	(Storaska, 1975, p. 33)
18.5%	(Denver study quoted by Storaska, p. 31)

#### Inter-racial Rape

Amir is the only author from the above mentioned, which states findings on the incidence of inter-racial rape. He found rape to be largely an intra-racial crime, with 92.9% of all rapes representing this type of offense. Of those rapes which were inter-racial, 3.3% were black offenders with white victims and 3.6% of white offenders with black victims. Amir added that the most violent crimes were those with black offenders and white victims.

The research from this study found 32% of the rapes to be inter-racial. Black offenders against white victims comprised 20% of that total. This is substantially different from Amir's findings.

In a 17 city survey by the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence, robbery contains the highest inter-racial component of any violent crime. Rape has the second-highest inter-racial component (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 234).

It might be argued that there could be an increase in inter-racial rape. There is a growing realization that the liberalization of social contact, opportunity and education and other American institutions is not proceeding well. Hostility is generated and magnified by more frequent social contact (Schultz, 1975, p. 139).

Sometimes inter-racial rape is committed for ideological reasons.

A black male may rape a white female to punish the white race for what they have done to his people. The female represents something greater than her personality. She becomes a target or symbol of something else. For example, a white male may want to know what it is like to have sexual relations with a black girl, etc.

The crime of forcible rape, committed by a black man against a white woman, possesses a number of characteristics setting it apart from most offenses against the person. For one thing, inter-racial forcible rape sometimes has an ideological component, representing an explosion of hatred by the black male against his oppressors (Drapkin & Viano, 1974, p. 93).

"Rape was an insurrectionary act. It delighted me that I was defying and trampling upon the white man's law, upon his system of values, and that I was defiling his women (Cleaver, 1968, p. 28)." "The victim of rape was no more than a means through which the black man attacked the white (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 33)." "Inter-racial rapes are sometimes political, aimed at symbolically diminishing womanhood and/or the woman of a special race, class or nation (Schultz, 1975, p. 125)."

In the present study there were ten cases of inter-racial rape, six of which were white victims and black offenders. In four of the six cases the respondents felt that the assault was prompted by racial differences—they wanted a white girl.

### Age of the Victim

All studies found that the teenager is the most likely rape victim. The present study has the mean age of the victim at 18.7 years.

Medea & Thompson (1974, p. 34) found that 65% of the victims were between 15 to 20 years old. Spielmann (1974, p. 108) found the 16 to 20 year old the most frequent victim. Amir (1971, p. 388) found that the highest percentage of rape victims fell between the ages of 15 and 19.

### Victim's Relationship to the Offender

52% Stranger	
48% Known to Each Other	(Amir, p. 237)
41% Stranger	
23% Acquaintance	
12% Date	(Medea & Thompson, p. 69)
53% Stranger	
30% Acquaintance	(Brownmiller, 1975, p. 391-2)
30% Stranger	
35% Acquaintance	
35% Date	(Storaska, 1975, p. 37)

The social relationship of the victim to the offender varies somewhat in the above studies. This thesis found that 50% of the time the offender was a stranger to the victim and 50% of the time they were acquainted.

### Place of the Assault

40% His or Her Home	
22% Cars	
15% Outdoors	(Spielmann, p. 110)
47% His or Her Home	
18% Cars	
25% Outdoors	
10% Inside Buildings	(Medea & Thompson, p. 203)

33% His or Her Home  
15% Cars (Amir, p. 209)

20-30% Victim's Home (Storaska, p. 224)

All authors have found that the victim or offender's home is the most common place for a rape to take place. This research agrees with that finding. This study found in 41% of the time, the assault took place in one of their homes. The car is another likely place for an assault. This study found 22% of the cases taking place in cars. Rape and sexual assault are usually considered indoor crimes. Spielmann found 15% and Medea & Thompson found one quarter of their assaults occurring outdoors. This research found 19% of the sample enacted outdoors.

#### Time of the Assault

30% 9 pm to 12 pm  
20% 12 pm to 33 am (Spielmann, p. 111)

49% 8 pm to 2 am (Amir, p. 168)

69% 6 pm to 3 am (Medea & Thompson, p. 213)

All studies clearly show that rape is a night crime. The research for this thesis concludes the same. Assaults occurred 22% of the time in the afternoon and 78% of the time in the evening.

#### Marital Status of the Victim

88% Single (Medea & Thompson, p. 176)

60% Single (Spielmann, p. 107)

Victims were generally unmarried. (Amir, p. 278)

The respondents in this study were single in 84% of the cases. Clearly, most of the victims in all of the studies are single.

The statistics listed quotes similar findings on the age of the victim, her marital status and the place of the assault. The "stranger" relationship of the victim to the offender varies from 30 to 53% in the studies. The race of the victim and the incidence of gang rape are not consistent within the different studies. It is interesting that some of the findings are nearly the same in spite of the great differences in the population samples.

### The Rapist

The literature suggests that rape is natural and typical of our society. There have always been rapes in any point in our history. "Rape occurs as a natural result of the social and sexual conditioning in our society (Criminal Justice Monograph, 1976, p. 5)." Griffin (1971) states that "rape is natural, not to rape must be taught (p. 9)." Rape is natural because this is one way the male has proven his domination over the weaker female as far back as the caveman. Aggression is a masculine trait. "Manliness and maleness are often closely associated with aggression, and this includes sexual aggression (p. 64)."

If rape is natural, the rapist is not a deviant. The typical rapist may be a normal personality type. "A recent study showed that convicted rapist were indistinguishable from ordinary men in psychological test (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 29)."

On a statistical average the man who has been convicted of rape was found to have a normal sexual personality tending to be different from the normal well-adjusted male only in having a greater tendency to express violence and rage (Schultz, 1975, p. 25).

The crime of rape can be seen as within the context of normal male behavior which is lacking only in propriety (Schultz, p. 110).

The rapist is a human being and no human being is all bad (Storaska, 1975, p. 94).

From the no-nonsense FBI statistics and some intensive sociological studies that are beginning to appear, we can see that the typical American rapist is no weirdo, psycho schizophrenic beset by timidity, sexual deprivation and a domineering wife or mother (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 191).

From the above quotes, it would appear that the typical rapist is a "normal" individual responding to his conditioning and human nature. This research found that 47% of the victims perceived the assailant as a normal personality type.

#### Self-Concept of the Victim

The victim may suffer an identity crisis after a rape. She may develop a self-image of being "the kind of woman who gets raped (Schultz, 1975, p. 133).

For woman, one error is fatal, therefore, the rapist can destroy identity with a single act (Metzger, 1976, p. 405). Whoever she had previously assumed herself to be, after the rape she is nothing but a body, a thing. Rape is a gross and extreme form of social regulation by which woman is brutally stripped of her humanity and confronted with her definition as a nonperson, a function (p. 408).

The rape victim may feel that her person was ruined, that she is worth less than other females who did not experience such an assault.

Once a woman has intercourse with a man, she has lost much of her bargaining power. Women are then felt to be sexually available to men, especially after they are known to have lost their virginity or developed a "bad reputation" (Kasinsky, 1975, p. 21).

Although today women do not automatically lose their social and economic value through rape, they are devalued through accusations of seductions (Metzger, p. 406).

"The rape victim shares the offender's characteristics, she is blameworthy and supposedly of low moral standing" (Schultz, 1975, p. 103). A damaged self-concept is often one of the after-effects of sexual abuse.

In the present study, 56% of the respondents reported a change in their self-concept. Stigma and self-concept are related. If an individual is stigmatized, the self-concept will be altered to include the new opinion held of himself by others. "We are more or less unconsciously seeing ourselves as others see us. We are unconsciously addressing ourselves as others address us (Mead, 1934, pp. 68-9)."

#### Conveying Information of the Assault

The victim often has the psychological need to discuss the assault with someone. She has to decide to whom she is going to confide this information. There are "conflicts connected with the decision of whether or not to tell anyone about the rape, if so, who that person should be, and what information should be conveyed and what withheld (Schultz, 1975 p. 130)." "The stigmatized feels unsure how the normals will identify and treat him (Goffman, 1963, p. 13)." "For the young adult, the rape presents the priority issues of dealing with telling people about the attack (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1975, p. 117)."

As the number of people who know about the assault increases, so does her chance of stigmatization. The more who know, the greater the chance of someone reacting negatively to that information. If she tries to keep the incident a secret, those who associate with her closely may be able to sense that something is wrong. Her emotional well being is communicated in ways other than in words. Those who are close to her may be precisely the people she wishes not to tell. It is difficult for her to hide this information.

Even where an individual could keep an unapparent stigma secret, he will find that intimate relations with others, ratified in our society by mutual confession of invisible failings, cause him either to admit his situation to the



intimate or to feel guilty for not doing so. In any case, nearly all matters which are very secret are still known to someone, and hence cast a shadow (Goffman, 1963, p. 74).

Even if the victim does not tell her family about the crime, the changes that will almost inevitably be produced in her behavior as a result of the crisis will become obvious to those close to her. They will wonder what is wrong and be upset by these changes for which they can see no reason (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1975, p. 169).

We couldn't tell our parents. We would be punished and it would be called protection (Corrnell & Wilson, 1974, P. 31).

The individuals intimates can become just the persons from whom he is most concerned with concealing something shameful (Goffman, pp. 53-54).

In the present study victims usually confided in their girlfriends and hid the information from their parents. Statements like "they'd kill me" were not uncommon. Some respondents stated it was difficult but necessary to discuss the assault. Victims often feel unsure how others will respond to this information.

#### Behavior Changes Caused by the Assault

Sexual assault may affect the entire life of the victim. Her attitudes of males and sex are the most likely subjects to be viewed differently, if an attitude change occurs at all. Also, victims are likely to develop an increasing fear of strangers.

In this study 22 victims reported changes in their behavior. This leaves 10 victims who did not change in any significant way.

<u>Behavior</u>	<u>Number of Cases</u>
Stopped Dating	7
Moved	3
Needed Psychological Help	5
Spoiled Identity	1
Developed Phobias	1
Divorced	2
Underwent an Abortion	2
Became an Alcoholic	1

Victims may tend to become paranoid and to feel someone is following them, or the environment is dangerous, even when this is not possible (U.S. Dept. of Justice, 1975, p. 167).

Attitudes such as this one prompted two respondents from this study to move out of their own apartment and into the security of their parent's home. They feared being alone, at least temporarily.

Three respondents from this study did not realize that they were victims of sexual abuse until years after the act had happened. They learned of their situation from other people, usually a wiser friend. "One woman I know enjoyed sex with an uncle all through childhood and never realized that anything was unusual until she went away to school (Schultz, 1975, p. 337)."

One respondent from the present study put herself in an uncomfortable situation because she did not want to offend anyone. Later she realized how foolish it was to be so concerned with being polite. Her good manners ended in her being raped.

One woman told us that she allowed herself to be taken into a dark alley because she was afraid of offending the man by implying that he might rape her. He did. In retrospect the woman seems terribly naive. But put yourself in her place at that moment and remember all of the similar situations in which you did not rudely avoid a man for fear of offending him. It is this kind of everyday occurrence that sets women up to be raped (Medea & Thompson, 1974, p. 52).

#### Other Remarks

The following quotes from the literature are compared to the findings of this research:

Women with specific religious orientation (sex is sin) are more likely to lose their sexual confidence. (They feel) sexually unworthy because they have been defiled (Masters & Johnson, 1976, p. 74).

In the present study religion was found to have no bearing on the response of the victim. Not one of the religious respondents stated anything about sin in connection with their assault.

"Revenge became an obsession (Metzger, 1976, p. 406)." Several respondents who knew the offender and faced him after the assault, were indeed obsessed with revenge. Some respondents did strike back against the offender but other respondents never moved beyond their fantasies. One respondent hit the rapist with an ashtry, another ran the rapist over with her car and a third respondent rumaged the offender's apartment. All the respondents felt better after these acts of aggression but also felt their acts were not nearly enough for justice.

"The most frequently encountered post rape complication is an aversion to all sexual activity (Masters & Johnson, 1976, p. 74)." This study would rather report that the victim was more likely to be sensitive about the specific sexual activity she was forced to perform rather than all sexual activity in general.

"Almost all rape victims say they trust men less after a rape (Notman & Nadelson, 1976, p. 410)." Some respondents mistrusted all men in general, others mistrusted only those males who shared characteristics with the offender.

Various factors seem to influence how the victim copes with the rape crisis such as the victim's personality style, the people available to her who respond to her distress in a serious and concerned manner, and the way in which she is treated by the people with whom she comes into contact after the rape (Burgess & Holmstrom, 1974, p. 41).

When a woman survives the physical trauma of rape, her emotional reaction may take many forms. She may cry, scream or tremble; she may be rigidly composed. She may smile inappropriately or tell the story with bursts of laughter. There is no uniform response to a rape, or a uniform time for recovery (Brownmiller, 1975, p. 404).

Each rape victim responds to and integrates the experience differently depending on her age, life situations, the circumstances of the rape, her specific personality style, and the responses of those from whom she seeks support (Notman & Nadelson, 1976, p. 411).

This study found that victims respond in a great variety of ways to a sexual assault. Each case is unique. There was no single factor shared by all of the thirty-two respondents.

## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

#### Selection of Respondents

Thirty-two victims of sexual abuse were interviewed for this study as respondents. The first two respondents were used to test the research tool but they were also included in the total number under analysis here.

It was difficult to locate this number of respondents. Five victims who were approached refused to take part in this study. It took over one and a half years to locate the present number of respondents.

The largest group of respondents, 38%, were friends and acquaintances of the researcher. This group represents less than one fifth of the friends and acquaintances the researcher has. These respondents offered their experiences only after they heard of the study.

The researcher gave lectures on rape in certain sociology courses. Three respondents were found in this way.

The college ad brought forth one quarter of the respondents. One male answered the ad but he was told that this study was restricted to females.

Three rape crisis centers were used, that of Oklahoma City, Tulsa and San Jose. One friend of the researcher, included in the above group, was a volunteer at a rape crisis center.

TABLE I  
LOCATING THE RESPONDENTS

Method	N	%
Friends and Acquaintances of the Interviewer	12	38
Referred through a Friend	2	6
Volunteered Information when the Researcher Addressed College Classes	3	9
Responded to an Ad in the College Paper	8	25
Through Rape Crisis Centers	7	22
TOTAL	32	100

#### Description of the Instrument

Three research tools were used for this study: a questionnaire, an interview and a scale. The questionnaire consists of thirteen questions of a factual nature. The respondents usually completed this section by themselves. Their replies were tabulated.

The interview consists of thirteen questions of an open-ended nature. The answers to these questions required an explanation, usually of several sentences. All questions were not relevant to all respondents. In some cases, questions were eliminated. The interview was the most flexible section of the study.

The scale consists of eight intervals ranging from "not serious" to "most serious." The respondents were asked to answer two questions, concerning their feelings at the time of the assault and the present time,

using the scale. They were asked "how emotionally upsetting was the experience on the day of its occurrence" and "how emotionally upsetting is that experience today, after time had passed." All respondents had at least six months between the assault and the interview. The questions explored if respondents felt less upset given time, or was their reaction maintained; if some females responded in varying degrees of emotional upset or if any respondents felt lightly about their experience.

#### Administering the Instrument

The respondent and researcher met one another face to face at a sociable place where a private talk was permissible. Three interviews were conducted over the telephone and one respondent gave her information through the mail. Sessions ranged from twenty to fifty minutes. The interviews were conducted in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere conducive to open and honest inquiry.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS OF THE DATA

The analysis of the information given by the rape and assault victims are listed in the below tables. The questionnaire was the main source of this part of the findings.

TABLE II  
CLASSIFICATION OF CASES

Type of Assault	N	%
Rape	23	72
Sexual Assault	4	13
Child Molestation	2	6
Attempted Rape	3	9
TOTAL	32	100

The sexual offenses have already been defined in Chapter I. Most of the respondents (72%) are rape victims. Gang rape occurred in five instances.



TABLE III  
AGE OF THE VICTIM AT THE TIME OF THE ASSAULT

Age in Years	N	%	Generalization
4	1	9	3 cases below the age of 10
9	2		
14	1		
15	1	44	14 cases in their teens
16	3		
17	2		
18	3		
19	4		
20	3		
21	4	47	15 cases in their twenties
22	3		
23	1		
24	2		
25	1		
28	1		
TOTAL	32	100	$\bar{X} = 18.7$ years

The majority (69%) of the respondents fall between the ages of 16 to 22 years old. The average age of these respondents is 18 years and 7 months.

In 50% of the cases the victim did not know the offender and could only guess at his age—Table IV. From these approximations the offender is below the age of 29 in 85% of the cases. Usually, the offender and victim are young, near to each other by age, with the offender being a few years older than his victim. In the cases where the offender was very much older than the victim, the offender held a position of authority over the victim, such as a doctor or a baby sitter.

TABLE IV  
APPROXIMATE AGE OF THE OFFENDER

Age in Years	N	%	Generalization
14	1	16	5 cases where the offender is in his teens
16	2		
18	2		
20's	6		
22	4		
23	2	69	22 cases in twenties
24	2		
25	3		
26	2		
27	1		
28	1	9	3 cases in thirties
29	1		
30's	1		
32	1		
35	1		
40's	1	6	2 cases over forty
60's	1		
TOTAL	32	100	

TABLE V  
TIME OF THE ASSAULT

Time	N	%
Afternoon	7	22
Evening	12	38
Late Evening--After 11 pm	13	40
TOTAL	32	100

TABLE VI  
PLACE OF THE ASSAULT

Setting	N	%
Victim's Home	6	19
Offender's Home	7	22
Car	7	22
Outdoors	6	19
Indoors	6	18
TOTAL	32	100

As shown in Table V, none of the assaults occurred in the morning. Most of the assaults occurred after dark—25 cases or 79% of the time. Sexual assault is most often an evening crime.

The location of the assault is evenly divided into the different areas listed in Table VI. It is somewhat surprising that in 19% of the time the assault occurred outdoors. Sexual crimes are usually considered an indoor activity. The outdoor attacks include two at picnic parties, one in a parking lot, one on campus grounds and one by a road. Indoor attacks include one elevator, one garage and one doctor's office.

Table VII shows that in most of the cases (59%), no weapon was used. Within this group of 19 cases, 14 knew each other. In the remaining 13 cases where a weapon was used, 11 cases were stranger relationships. Therefore, the stranger assailants tend to threaten with weapons. The two cases listed as "other" include a belt and a large dog. The offender who knows his victim does not seem to threaten the victim with weapons.

TABLE VII  
USE OF WEAPONS

Weapon	N	%
No Weapon	19	59
Gun	7	22
Knife	4	13
Other	2	6
TOTAL	32	100

TABLE VIII  
RACE OF THE VICTIM AND THE OFFENDER

Victim	Assailant	N	%
White	White	18	56
Black	Black	2	6
Spanish	Spanish	2	6
White	Black	6	20
Black	White	1	3
Indian	Black	1	3
White	Iranian	1	3
White	Spanish	1	3
TOTAL		32	100

Intra-racial assaults occurred in 22 cases or 69% of the time.  
Inter-racial assaults occurred in 10 cases or 31% of the time. One

respondent listed under White/White was raped by a masked man she assumed to be white. Compared to other studies, this research has a high incidence of inter-racial rapes.

TABLE IX  
VICTIM'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE ASSAILANT

Relationship	N	%
Stranger	12	38
Met that Day	4	12
Acquaintance	6	20
Friend	2	6
Date	2	6
Boyfriend	2	6
Other	4	12
TOTAL	32	100

The category listed as "other" includes one doctor, one high school teacher, and two baby sitters. The distinction between the categories listed as "stranger" and "met that day" is in the former instance no friendly conversation preceeded the assault. The stranger attacked the respondent without first trying to win her friendship. "Met that day" assailants are really strangers to the respondent who first appeared as trustworthy. If these two categories are lumped together, 50% of the offenders are strangers to the victim.

TABLE X  
REPORTING THE SEXUAL ASSAULT TO THE POLICE

Action Taken	N	%
Reported	10	31
Not Reported	22	69
TOTAL	32	100

TABLE XI  
CONFIDANT OF THE VICTIM—THE FIRST  
TO BE TOLD OF THE ASSAULT

Relationship	N	%
Girlfriend	16	50
Male Friend	2	6
Boyfriend	2	6
Husband	3	9
Mother or Parents	5	16
Other	4	13
TOTAL	32	100

Table X indicates that less than a third of the respondents reported the incident. Of the cases reported to the police, nine were rapes and one was an attempted rape.

Table XI indicates that half of the respondents confided the information of their assault to a girlfriend. This shows that the respondents felt peers are better comforters than close family members. Respondents apprehended greater stigma from their close family members.

The category listed as "other" includes one sister, one psychology class, and two police officers. Note that this table lists the first confidant of the respondents. It does not mean that only five mothers ever found out about the assault of their daughters, rather, in five cases the mother was the first informed of the assault.

TABLE XII  
TELLING THE MOTHER OF THE ASSAULT

Action Taken	N	%
The Respondent Told Her Mother	8	25
The Mother Learned from Someone Else Indirectly	10	31
The Mother Was Never Told	14	44
TOTAL	32	100

It seems that there is a lack of communication between mother and daughter. In 75% of the cases, the respondent did not tell her mother of the assault—someone else did or she was never told. Several respondents stated they did not want their mothers to know.

TABLE XIII  
CHANGED ATTITUDE TOWARDS MEN AFTER THE ASSAULT

Response	N	%
Yes, Relations with Males Changed	13	40
No, Relations with Males were not Affected	12	38
Yes, with Specific Males, not Men in General	7	22
TOTAL	32	100

Twenty respondents (62%) experienced some difference in their relationship with males. Thirteen respondents temporarily stopped dating males. Seven respondents developed specific prejudices towards certain males—four respondents developed a prejudice against blacks, one shunned Iranians and two others could not tolerate males of certain body types which reminded them of their assailants.

TABLE XIV  
VICTIM'S PERCEPTION OF THE ASSAULT—  
CRISIS OR NOT

Perception	N	%
Perceived as a Crisis	21	68
Not Perceived as a Crisis	11	32
TOTAL	32	100



All respondents of sexual assault, child molesting and attempted rape felt that their experience was not a crisis for them. Also, four rape victims felt the experience was not a crisis. Those who did feel the experience was a crisis, were exclusively rape victims.

TABLE XV  
HOW THE VICTIM PERCEIVED THE SEXUAL ASSAILANT

Perception	N	%
Normal Personality	15	47
Needs Psychological Counseling	14	44
Criminal Personality	3	9
TOTAL	32	100

Nearly half of the respondents thought the assailant was a normal person--15 cases or 47%. In 6 of these instances the assailant was a stranger to the respondent. The victims are more likely to perceive the assailants as sick individuals rather than criminal personality types.

Table XVI indicates that a little more than half of the victims did experience an impairment in their own self image. Seven of the fourteen respondents who reported no change in their self-concept, were rape victims. Change in self-concept could mean either a positive or negative change. One victim, who managed to escape being raped, felt more confident in her ability to take care of herself--her self-concept was

improved. Another respondent felt more sexually attractive after receiving advances from her high school teacher. Although she found the experience repugnant, her self-concept improved.

TABLE XVI  
SELF-CONCEPT CHANGE IN VICTIMS

Response	N	%
Yes, Self-Concept Changed	18	56
No, Self-Concept Not Affected	14	44
TOTAL	32	100

TABLE XVII  
MARITAL STATUS OF THE VICTIM AT THE  
TIME OF THE ASSAULT

Status	N	%
Single	27	84
Married	5	16
TOTAL	32	100

Four of the five married victims discussed their assaults with their husbands. One respondent believed her husband caused the abduction and

gang rape she experienced. She divorced her husband and aborted his child. When the victim marries after the assault, she may never mention the incident to him. Some of the respondents told their new husbands but others did not.

TABLE XVIII  
RELIGION OF THE VICTIMS

Attitude	N	%
Religious Disposition and Attends Services Regularly	8	25
Religious Ties but Rarely Attends Services	7	22
Professes No Religion	17	53
TOTAL	32	100

Religious as well as non-religious females get raped. Religions did not influence stigma or personal identity in any manner.

Table XIX indicates that status was considered equal if both the victim and assailant were students or from the same neighborhood. Often, the respondents felt superior in inter-racial assaults or where the respondent was known to have more education than the offender. Lower status was claimed by respondents in the following relationships: patient-doctor, student-teacher, prostitute-john. Status was determined subjectively by the respondents with a variety of factors in mind—education, occupation, race, etc. Status was not strictly defined for this research.

TABLE XIX  
VICTIM'S PERCEPTION OF HER STATUS  
COMPARED TO THE ASSAILANT

Perception	N	%
Equal	12	32
Superior	13	41
Lower	6	19
No Answer	1	3
TOTAL	32	100

## CHAPTER V

### INTERPRETATION OF THE RESULTS

#### Introduction

Social stigma is a consequence of an unfavorable public reaction against the individual. If people are supportive of him, there is no stigma. Other people include important others in the victim's life—wife or husband, parents, etc., peers or neighbors, and social agencies such as the police, doctors and the press. The power to stigmatize comes from these other people living in the same social network as the stigmatized individual.

It is possible that some people will be supportive of a victim while others will not. This is a case listed as "mixed support." Stigma will then be deduced by other factors, such as behavior changes or weakened self-concept. Not confiding the experience to any other people is also considered an indicator of stigma. The concealment could only mean that the victim is afraid of the reaction he would receive from these others. Their disapproval is assumed by the victim and thus, adds to stigma.

It should be noted what stigma is not. Stigma is not a fear of others, a changed personality, a long recovery period, or a nervous breakdown. A victim may experience any or more of such changes and have the support and understanding of those around him. Social stigma is strictly related to interaction or the lack of it, between people.

## Comparative Analysis

The following tables deal either with stigma, public reaction or the victim's emotional response to her assault. Once stigma is defined as lack of public support, it can be seen what influences that public support.

TABLE XX  
THE PUBLIC REACTION TO THE VICTIMS

Type of Support Given To the Victim	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Support	0	0	8	25
No Support	11	34	0	0
Mixed Support	8	25	5	16
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

$N = 32$ ;  $X^2 = 21.22$ ; d.f. = 2;  $p < .001$

In 24 cases the respondents received mixed or no support from the public. The public is largely unsympathetic and needs to become more aware of the situation of the victim. In 59% of the cases the respondents were stigmatized and 75% of the cases the respondents met at least some non-supportive responses from others.

Table XXI indicates that there is a relationship between stigma and the type of offense involved. The most seriously violated victims are subjected to more stigmatization than the less serious offenses.

TABLE XXI  
STIGMA RESULTING FROM DIFFERENT TYPES OF ASSAULT

The Nature of the Assault	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Rape	17	53	6	19
Sexually Assaulted	0	0	4	13
Molested as a Child	2	6	0	0
Attempted Rape	0	0	3	9
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = 13.62$ ; d.f. = 3;  $p < .01$

Rape victims are stigmatized at a rate of almost 3 to 1. All of the child molested cases were stigmatized while sexual assaults and attempted rapes were not.

Table XXII indicates that stranger or boyfriend assaults make no difference to the public reaction. The victims who are stigmatized as a consequence of rape or sexual assault are stigmatized no matter if the rapist was known to them or a stranger.

Table XXIII indicates that males are less supportive of victims than other females. Most victims like to talk about the sexual attack inflicted on them to their girlfriends and this is the case regardless of their perception of stigma resulting from the attack. Confidant is a category that represents the first person told of the assault and does not exhaust all those who were told of the experience. Subsequently, certain confidants do not free the victim of stigmatization.

TABLE XXII  
THE VICTIM-ASSAILANT RELATIONSHIP VS. STIGMA

Relationship	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Stranger	9	28	7	22
Acquaintance	5	16	3	10
Date or Boyfriend	2	6	2	6
Other	3	9	1	3
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = .65$ ; d.f. = 3;  $p > .05$

TABLE XXIII  
WHOM THE VICTIMS TALKED TO ABOUT  
THEIR SEXUAL ASSAULT

Confidant	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Girlfriend	8	25	8	25
Male Friend	2	6	0	0
Boyfriend	2	6	0	0
Mother	2	6	3	10
Husband	1	3	1	3
Police	1	3	1	3
Other	3	10	0	0
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = 8.2$ ; d.f. = 6;  $p > .05$



TABLE XXIV  
THE VICTIM'S AGE IN RELATION TO PUBLIC SUPPORT

Age	Support f	No Support f	Mixed Support f
4	0	0	1
9	0	2	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
13	0	0	0
14	0	0	1
15	0	1	0
16	2	1	0
17	0	1	1
18	2	0	1
19	0	3	1
20	1	1	1
21	2	0	3
22	0	0	3
23	0	0	1
24	0	1	0
25	0	1	0
26	0	0	0
27	0	0	0
28	1	0	0
TOTAL	8	11	13
	$\bar{X} = 16.25$	$\bar{X} = 27.45$	$\bar{X} = 18.77$
		Younger	Older
	Support	2	6
	No Support	4	7
	Mixed	2	11
	$N = 32; X^2 = 1.4; d.f. = 2; p > .05$		

There is no significant relationship between the age of the victim and her stigmatization. Young victims are considered to be 16 years old and younger and older victims are 17 years and older.

TABLE XXV

THE INITIAL EMOTIONAL RESPONSE OF THE VICTIMS  
COMPARED TO THEIR STIGMATIZATION

Immediate Response	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Very Upset	17	53	5	16
Mildly Upset	2	6	5	16
Not Upset	0	0	3	9
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

N = 32;  $\chi^2 = 10.064$ ; d.f. = 2;  $p > .01$

The emotional response was determined by the scale given at the time of the interview:

6.5 through 8 = very upset  
3.5 through 6 = mildly upset  
3.5 and less = not upset

An assault may be very upsetting without stigma, but the majority of emotionally upsetting assaults were stigmatized. In order for stigma to be a possibility, the assault must be a severe emotional experience. If the experience is only mildly upsetting, the victim will not be stigmatized. None of the victims reporting "not upset" perceived themselves as stigmatized. The more the victim thought of having been stigmatized, the more she thought of the public having withdrawn its support.

Table XXVI when compared to Table XXV indicates that the initial perception of stigma did not seem to influence the recovery of the victim from her trauma. Many had recovered after a lapse of time.

TABLE XXVI  
THE VICTIM'S PRESENT EMOTIONAL STATE IN  
RELATION TO STIGMATIZATION

Response	Stigma		No Stigma	
	N	%	N	%
Very Upset	5	15	3	9
Mildly Upset	10	31	4	13
Not Upset	4	13	6	19
TOTAL	19	59	13	41

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = 3.75$ ; d.f. = 2;  $p > .05$

The "present emotional state" of the respondents was determined by the scale given at the interview.

6 through 8 = very upset  
3 through 5 = mildly upset  
1 through 2 = not upset

Table XXVII indicates that victims assaulted by a stranger usually reported a "very upset" response. The cases listed as "not upset" were cases of sexual assault and attempted rape.

Most respondents found the assault very upsetting (69%), especially the stranger-attack and "other" category. "Other" category represents one doctor, one high school teacher and two baby sitters.

Table XXVIII indicates that the victim-assailant relationship is evenly dispersed over the different kinds of reaction from the victim with the exception of the date-boyfriend category. In this instance none of the respondents reported a very upset reaction.

TABLE XXVII

VICTIM'S REACTION TO SEXUAL ASSAULT IN  
RELATION TO THEIR RELATIONSHIP  
WITH THE OFFENDER

Victim's Relationship	Victim's Reaction					
	Very Upset		Mildly Upset		Not Upset	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Stranger	12	37	2	6	2	6
Acquaintance	4	13	3	10	1	3
Date or Boyfriend	2	6	2	6	0	0
Other	4	13	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	22	69	7	22	3	9

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = 11.82$ ; d.f. = 6;  $p > .05$

TABLE XXVIII

THE VICTIMS' EMOTIONAL STATE AT THE TIME OF  
THE INTERVIEW COMPARED TO THE VICTIM-  
ASSAILANT RELATIONSHIP

Victim-Assailant Relationship	Reaction					
	Very Upset		Mildly Upset		Not Upset	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Stranger	5	16	6	19	5	16
Acquaintance	2	6	4	13	2	6
Date or Boyfriend	0	0	3	9	1	3
Other	1	3	2	6	1	3
TOTAL	5	25	15	47	9	28

$N = 32$ ;  $\chi^2 = 3.87$ ; d.f. = 6;  $p > .05$

The above table shows the emotional state of the respondents at the time of the interview. The victim's relationship to the offender did not seem to make much difference as to how they felt.

TABLE XXIX  
THE REASONS FOR NOT REPORTING THE ASSAULT  
TO THE POLICE

Reasons Given by the Respondent	N
Did not want Parents to Know	4
Feared Police and Court System	5
Did not Know or Consider It a Crime	7
Did not Want Other People to Know	2
Wanted to Forget It	3
Parents Decided not to Report	1
TOTAL	22

Of the 32 respondents in this study, 22 did not report their assault to the police. Almost one third, 7 cases out of 22, did not know or consider the assault a criminal offense. In 10 cases embarrassment seems to be the key motivating factor to their not reporting.

### Respondent's Reaction Towards Their Assault

Figure 1 illustrates the respondent's emotional response towards the assault at the time that it happened, ( $T_1$ ) and the reaction the respondent had of that assault at the time of the interview ( $T_2$ ). Although most respondents reported less emotional trauma at the time of the interview, 28% or 9 respondents still showed the same traumatic effects as at the time of rape.

The additional factor of length of time between the assault and the interview was added to Figure 2. It may be noted that for 4 out of the 9 cases, the rape incident was less than a year old.

Time does not always heal the wounds of a traumatic experience, at least the memory of it. Most respondents recovered from the experience or moved in the direction of less emotional involvement but for those that did not, some were given as much as 6 years to lessen their emotional response and were unable to do so.

It is noteworthy that 4 out of 5 of the victims of gang rape are still emotionally upset over the experience. The time lapse ranges from 1 to 6 years ago. The one case of gang rape which did recover had an 8 year time lapse between the assault and interview. Gang rapes are especially difficult to overcome, even after a number of years.

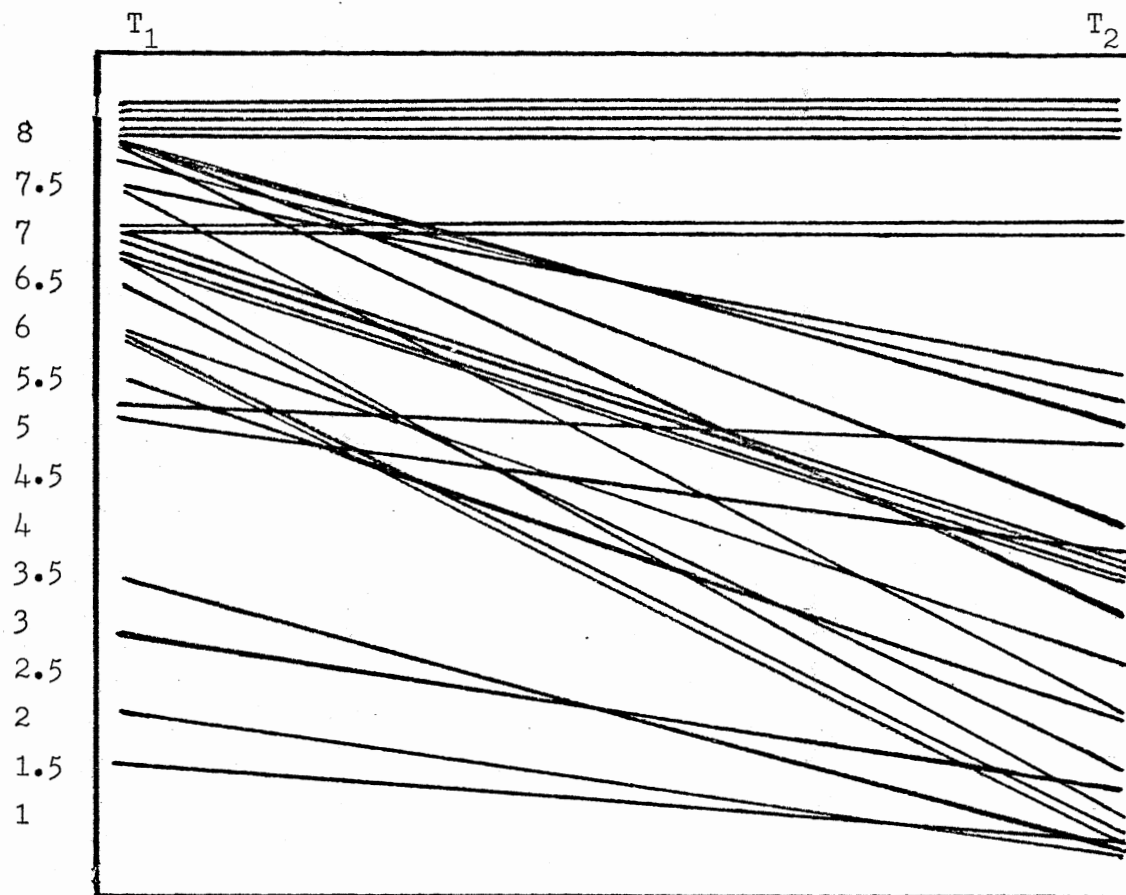


Figure 1. The Respondent's Emotional Response at the Time of the Assault ( $T_1$ ) and at the Time of the Interview ( $T_2$ )

List of  $T_1$  and  $T_2$  from the Respondents

	$T_1$	$T_2$
1-	5	5
2-	7	4
3-	3.5	1
4-	6.	1
5-	8	3
6-	8	4
7-	7.8	5.5
8-	7	1.5
9-	1.5	1
10-	5	4
11-	8	8
12-	7	4
13-	6	3
14-	2.8	1.5
15-	7	4
16-	6.5	1.5
17-	2	1
18-	8	8
19-	5.5	2
20-	8	8
21-	8	8
22-	7.5	6
23-	8	5
24-	8	8
25-	7.5	2
26-	6	1
27-	6.5	3.5
28-	7	7
29-	7	7
30-	6.5	4
31-	7	4
32-	6.5	3.5

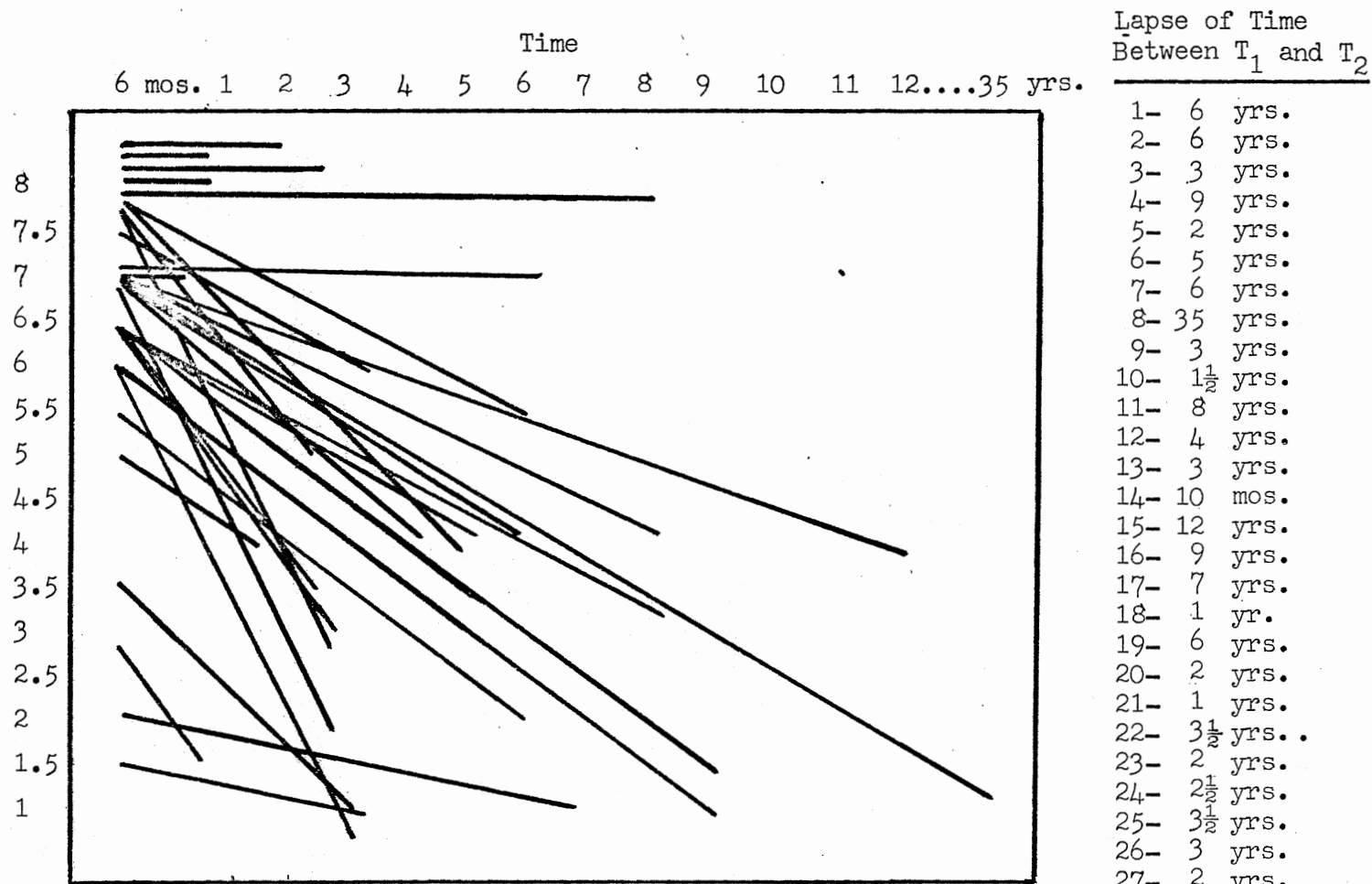


Figure 2. The Respondent's Emotional Reaction at ( $T_1$  and  $T_2$ ) and Time Lapse Between Assault and Interview



### Some Observations from the Case Studies

Seeing the rapist after the assault adds to the tension of the victim. Seven respondents were put in such a position. Two of these had seen their assailant repeatedly because they were students at the same college. Both of these respondents (#29 and #31) reacted very strongly to these repeated encounters. One respondent became a temporary alcoholic, the other began to see a therapist several times a week. This respondent was obsessed with revenge and eventually took action against the assailant. (Numbers given in parenthesis refer to case studies in Appendix A.)

Three respondents had seen their assailant one other time. Their reaction was nausea, anxiety and fear. They did not talk to the assailant though in one case he tried to approach her and in the other two cases, it was merely a glance from a distance (#1, #2, and #27).

Two respondents spoke to the assailant after the assault. One assailant apologized and the other proposed marriage (#3 and #13).

These seven cases do not include those victims who had seen their assailants in police custody. This research did not collect any information as to how many respondents saw their assailants in connection with the police.

Apparently, seeing the assailant again places the memory of the traumatic experience in the forefront, disallowing it to recede and be forgotten.

Lack of communication between three respondents and their parents stems from their parents' strict religious beliefs. The respondents specifically mentioned religion as a factor contributing to their parents' lack of understanding.

Rape sometimes resulted because the female did not want to be impolite. Respondents accepted dates they did not want to attend, accepted rides in cars when they did not want to go and joined company because they did not want to appear prejudiced. These respondents lacked the assertiveness necessary to free themselves from unwanted situations. They were intimidated into circumstances leading to rape (#2, #12, and #21).

Five respondents were obsessed with perpetrating revengful acts against their assailant. Four of these respondents took action. In only one case did the victim take severe direct action against her assailant. She tried to kill him. The attempt was unsuccessful. She tried to run him over with her car. The other three acts of revenge were: disrupting the assailant's apartment, hitting the assailant with an ashtray, and putting sugar into the assailant's gas tank.

One respondent did not act. She was afraid that her retribution would reciprocate additional hostilities.

Revenge helped improve the victim's self-image. The respondents were made to feel helpless but through revenge they were able to assert themselves once more (#7, #18, #26, #29, #31).

The lie-detector has worked against the victim. Two respondents reported not doing well enough on the polygraph test to be believed. Both cases were dropped by the D.A. The assailants managed to do better than the victims though they were lying (#21 and #30).

The lie-detector can indicate—through writing down meticulously the changes in the psychogalvanic reflex—that the human guinea pig under investigation reacts more emotionally to certain questions than to others. True, this overreaction may be the reaction to having told a lie, but it may also be an innocent person's reaction to an emotion-laden situation or even to an increased fear of unjust accusation. The

interpersonal processes between interrogator and testee have just as much influence on the emotional reactions and the changes in the galvanic reflex as feelings of inner guilt and confusion. This experiment only indicates inner turmoil and hidden repressions, with all their doubts and ambiguities. It is not in fact a lie-detector, although it is used as such. As a matter of fact, the pathological liar and the psychopathic, conscienceless personality may show less reaction to this experiment than do normal people (Meerloo, 1961, p. 68).

#### Limitations of the Study

One interview conducted over the telephone was adequate but was not enlightening. Three interviews used this medium where two went well but one did not. The respondent was in a great hurry to end the conversation and did not elaborate on any of the questions.

This study discusses social stigma yet the only people interviewed were the victims and not other people important in the victim's life. If a wife was stigmatized, the husband would feel repercussions. Stigma is not limited to the victim, therefore, her important others could have been interviewed in this study.

The size of the population sample (32) is rather small to note trends. With a larger sample better calculations could be made. The selection of respondents was the greatest limitation.

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## APPENDIX A

### CASE STUDIES

#### Case 1.

At a college dance, the respondent met a male, not a student, who offered to drive her home. Once they were in the car, he refused to take her home unless she had intercourse with him. It grew late in the evening, she was worried about being missed at home and she submitted.

She initially told one girlfriend who was sympathetic towards her. No one else was told for a long time after that. It was not reported to the police.

She found the situation "humiliating." She said she had never met such "viciousness and selfishness" in a male before.

Her behavior did not change except for staying far away from the rapist, whom she did see on other occasions. The sight of him made her pale and sick. Her self-concept remained the same. No Stigma.

#### Case 2.

The respondent met a male student at a college party. He asked her to dance and later asked if she would like a ride home. She said she really did not want to accept that ride, but he was persistent and she finally accepted. He raped her before letting her go home.

She told several of her girlfriends about the rape but they were not supportive. Mainly, they were surprised that this was her first sexual experience. She did not tell her parents or the police.

She stopped dating for three months. She believed the experience had visibly changed her, that others would be able to see that she had been raped. Her self-concept changed for she felt she would never be the same. She was especially concerned with the idea of missing the first sexual-romantic encounter of her life.

She saw the rapist drive by her one day and immediately she became nauseated. Physically he was tall and heavy. To this day, she is apprehensive of tall and heavy men. Stigma.

#### Case 3.

A male friend was invited into the respondent's apartment. He made advances toward her which were at first accepted. He became more aggressive and she could not successfully push him away. He had intercourse with her though she resisted. The next day he apologized and proposed marriage.

She told her roommate about the experience who responded with sympathy. The next time she talked about the incident, it was eight months later. She told a current boyfriend--he reacted with shock. None of her family were ever told, nor were the police. No Stigma.

#### Case 4.

The respondent was walking on campus grounds early in the evening. A man with a knife grabbed her from behind and raped her on the ground.

She became frantic. There were bruises all over neck. When he left, she ran into the nearest store and screamed the entire story to all who were there. The police were called at once.

The police were harsh with her. She was sent to the hospital where she was treated somewhat better. Her boyfriend and parents were told. They discussed the possibility of an abortion in case of pregnancy. They were concerned, upset, but supportive.

In the following weeks she could not bear to be alone. She needed constant company. Months later, she feared strangers. Her life had been threatened, but on the positive side, she felt fortunate to have escaped without greater physical harm. Stigma.

#### Case 5.

The respondent invited a male friend, ten years her senior, into her apartment, "just for a talk." She thought they had a platonic relationship, but then he raped her. She was shocked. She considered the act cruelly sadistic. She physically grappled with him, which resulted in her being bruised.

The next day she committed herself into a hospital, the psychiatric ward, where she stayed for six months. For a period of time she was insensitive to physical sensations. Her hospitalization was not entirely motivated by the rape, for she had other problems as well.

The first time she spoke of the rape was at a group therapy session. They were supportive.

A year later, she reported the rape to the police because her rapist was being held for other rapes. The police were suspicious and tried to confuse her. She felt they were trying to make her responsible



for what had happened. Her mother also learned of the assault one year later. The mystery of her daughter's hospitalization was now solved. Little was said between them of the incident. Stigma.

#### Case 6.

The respondent, a high school girl, went to an inter-racial party. Three white high school girls and four black males in their twenties attended. The respondent was raped and another girl was beaten. No one helped them even though they were crying and screaming.

The respondent was a friend of the rapist's wife, but not the rapist himself. After the incident, she told the wife what had happened. The wife filed for a divorce.

The respondent lived in a small town and was very aware of the racial prejudice that existed there. She thought she was helping to prevent prejudice by attending the party. The incident became well-known throughout her school. After that she felt she could not date white males. She dated black males exclusively for two years. She said she did everything she was not suppose to do. Her self-concept changed completely.

She did not report the rape to the police. Her parents were told much later, by someone else. They wanted her to undergo counseling. They discussed the possibility of her having V.D.

The respondent was the subject of gossip in her home town and school. Many of her peers kept quietly away from her. Stigma.

#### Case 7.

Two white girls were hitchhiking and met an older black male (in his thirties.) They talked for some time and the girls felt safe

enough to accept an invitation into his home. Later in the evening he pointed a gun at them and threatened rape. The respondent bargained with him. She performed fellatio if he promised to let them go.

The girls continued to hitchhike. Those who were told of the assault had mixed reactions. Some said that incidents like those were part of the risk of hitchhiking. It was not reported to the police. Parents were never told. No Stigma.

#### Case 8.

The respondent, a young, black, and naive woman, went to see her doctor for sexual information. Her doctor was a middle-aged white man. Specifically, she wanted to know if she was pregnant. The doctor soon discovered that she did not know what was meant by sexual intercourse. He explained it to her, by way of demonstration. He charged her for an office visit.

She did not report this to the police because she did not understand the full implication of the act. Her friends called her stupid or found the story laughable. She never told her parents and her present husband was never told either.

Her behavior did not change. She became very angry only after her friends explained to her that she had been duped. Stigma.

#### Case 9.

The respondent, a prostitute, had a business appointment with a "trick" who did not hold to his end of the bargain. He forcibly performed cunnilingus on her though she was screaming for him to stop. The incident left her with bruises, leaving her unable to work for two weeks.

She explained what had happened to her boss and other girls at the "studio." They understood without question. She and the other girls feel it is a part of the risks involved with the job. Police and parents were not told. No Stigma.

Case 10.

The respondent invited a male she was dating into her apartment. He became sexually aggressive and attempted to rape her. She was very frightened but managed to get away.

She stopped dating that male and all others for six months. She never told her parents or the police. Her girlfriends were sympathetic towards her. She did not consider this a crisis, but she did learn a lesson about aggressive males. No Stigma.

Case 11.

The respondent as a high school student, was invited to a party which took place out by a lake. Ten males and eight females were present. A male student, who had been drinking, made advances towards her, and he ultimately raped her. She fought him with a broken bottle but was overpowered.

For seven years she never mentioned the rape to anyone. She first spoke of the assault to a psychology class which she was teaching. Some of the males acted as though such a thing was not possible, and others kept away from her. Females were more open to discussion. They discussed assaults that had happened to them. The respondent feels that sexual abuse is far too frequent and that every female she knows has some horrible story to relate. She is suspicious of all males.

Her parents are very religious and she felt they would not understand if they were told. There was no report to the police.

The respondent is a lesbian. The rape greatly added toward her mistrust of men. Stigma.

#### Case 12.

The respondent did not want to date the assailant, but he asked persistently and she finally accepted. He raped her on their fourth date. Only then did she realize she should have been more persistent about her own feelings. She was fighting and crying the entire time. This was her first sexual experience.

The respondent lived in a neighborhood where everyone knew one another. Her family knew the assailant and his family. She told the rapist's wife what had happened. The wife was shocked. The respondent was never sure who knew of the incident and who did not. She believed this story must have been known by others she did not tell.

One year later she told a girlfriend who responded sympathetically. A current boyfriend was also understanding. Two years later she told her mother who reacted with shock. Her father was never told for he might have reacted with violence.

Her assailant was heavy-set and tall. Today she still fears males with a similar body build. Stigma.

#### Case 13.

The respondent accepted a ride in a car from an acquaintance of hers. Instead of taking her home, he drove to a quiet spot and raped her. He had a gun with him.

Three months after the incident, she related the story to a male friend. He made no comment. Her mother was told by someone else, months after it happened. She wanted to know why her daughter did not come to her when it happened. The police were not notified.

The only change in her behavior was her avoiding places where she thought she might see the rapist again. She did meet him accidentally in spite of her precautions. He apologized and said he did not mean to do it. She maintained a strong self-concept.

She is less trusting of others, especially strangers. She will let strangers talk while she carefully listens. No Stigma.

#### Case 14.

The respondent went to a high school graduating party which took place by a lake. She drank herself into a stupor. When she awoke, she realized she had been raped. Totally disgusted, she ran out into the lake and sat there, chin high, until someone else carried her out of the water.

Soon she began college. The new environment of the school helped remove her thoughts of the assault.

A week after the incident she told some of her girlfriends. This was the first time she spoke of the assault. Several of her friends thought the rape was her own fault because of her drinking habits. This infuriated the respondent. Other friends were more understanding. She was afraid to tell her parents. There was no report to the police. Stigma.

Case 15.

The respondent was repeatedly molested by a baby sitter, friend of her parents', when she was nine years old. Many years later she realized what had happened to her. She was shocked and appalled.

She told a few friends of the molestation. They were horrified, thought she was "wierd" and avoided her company. She was sorry she told them. Only one friend understood and sympathized with her. Police and parents were never told. Stigma.

Case 16.

The respondent was molested by a high school boy when she was nine years old. She sensed that he was weak and not in control of himself. She was first afraid that he might kidnap her, but once she was released, she felt safe again.

She did not tell anyone of this experience until a year later. Her ten year old girlfriends were fascinated and wanted to know all the details. Some disbelieved it. She told her sister who related the full story to her parents. Nothing was done. She was treated as though nothing had happened.

Her behavior did not change. This was not a crisis for her. Her self-concept was not affected. No Stigma.

Case 17.

The respondent, a fourteen year old girl, accompanied her father to the library. As he studied, she explored the building. The assailant spotted her several times walking across the hallway. When she entered the elevator, he did too. He pointed a knife at her and told

her to lift her skirts. He was shaking and seemed very nervous. She said she felt more confident than he looked. In a minute, the elevator stopped and two other persons entered. She did not say a word, but exited and ran to tell her father.

That day both parents discussed the incident with her. The respondent said that they were more upset than she was. When she related the story to her friends, they were interested and excited about her adventure.

She developed a temporary phobia towards elevators. She continued to go to school and did not change her behavior in anyway. Her self-concept was not affected. She is cautious towards strangers and even today, when she leaves her home, she turns all the lights on. She is aware of locking everything and when she walks outside, she carries something which could be used as a weapon. This incident was not a crisis in her life but it has made her aware of what can happen at times. No Stigma.

#### Case 18.

The respondent accompanied her roommate to the city where her roommate was going to meet her boyfriend and an arranged date for the respondent. That evening, they smoked grass together. The respondent feels that some other drug must have been added because the fumes had rendered her unconscious. When she awoke there was evidence that she had been raped.

She showered, shaved herself, showered again, screamed and could not believe what happened to her. She was unable to drive. Her roommate had to take her home.

The respondent related this to her boyfriend who was completely unconcerned. She had no idea he would respond so callously. She stopped relations with him.

Revenge was on her mind. Since she knew the address of the assailant, she had no trouble in finding him. She sat in her car, waited for him to leave his home and then she tried to run him over. She meant to kill him but the speed of the car was not enough and he was only mildly injured. She was arrested but the charges were dropped.

Her roommate was unsympathetic. The respondent ceased being her friend. Other friends were supportive.

The respondent trusts men less and does not smoke grass with them any longer. Her self-concept did not alter. She thought of the incident many times and feels that it was a crisis in her life. Stigma.

#### Case 19.

The respondent was a employee at a hospital. She was returning from lunch, parking her car, when she noticed a black man who looked like he was in distress. She went over to him asking if he needed help. When she was in his reach, he knocked her down to the ground, slapped her across the face and kicked her in the back. He jumped on top of her and placed his hands under her dress. She fought as hard as she could and managed to get away.

She entered the hospital and told the other employees what happened. They were shocked but supportive. The police were called. Other women had been raped by someone who sounded like the same man but she was unable to identify any of the mug-shoots shown her.

Her parents were told that evening. They were supportive. Her self-concept was improved because she felt she had handled the situation well. This was not a crisis for her. No Stigma.



Case 20.

A four year old girl was repeatedly molested and possibly raped by her uncle, a fourteen year old, who often used to baby-sit for her. Genital contact was made.

The mother caught her daughter initiating sexual activity with a little boy, the same age as her daughter. The mother asked where she had learnt to do things like that and the daughter replied that her uncle had showed her. The girl liked it very much and began seducing other little boys.

The parents are most concerned and upset. Their daughter is now seeing a child therapist.

The respondent was the girl's father. This is the only case where someone other than the victim, was the respondent. Stigma.

Case 21.

The respondent met a black male who knew her by name and said he was a friend of her boyfriend's. Since he seemed to be acquainted with her, she talked to him for awhile. He said he was going to meet another friend and asked if she would like to join them. Initially she did not want to go, but for fear of looking prejudice to him, she accepted. They drove to a lake and there she was gang raped by the two males. When she tried to run away she was caught and hit.

She reported this to the police. A female detective was in charge. She said she was treated well. She was escorted to the hospital and treated well by them also. The D.A. had her undergo a lie detector test which made her appear as though she had been lying. The rapists also

took the lie detector test and managed to do well by it. The D.A. suggested that the case be dropped. The respondent felt that this humiliation was worse than the rape.

She was on the verge of a nervous break-down and began seeing a psychiatrist. She enrolled in self-defense classes. She stayed home more often.

One girlfriend was supportive of her situation. Her boyfriend asked why she did not fight harder. Her mother wanted her to leave school to live with her again. Her mother was hysterical.

Her self-concept underwent a change. She had sexual and racial problems to overcome. She was raped on two separate occasions and wondered what it was about her that made her prone to violence. Stigma.

#### Case 22.

The respondent was a door-to-door sales girl selling make-up. A black girl said she was interested in the product and asked if she could return at an appointed time. When the respondent kept the appointment, the door was locked behind her. Two males had joined them. They injected heroine into her and performed numerous sexual acts on her, including the female. Also, they used a broom to violate her. Guns were pointed at her. It was not until the morning of the next day that she escaped.

This was reported to the police. The first officer thought she was lying. He did not believe her story about her needle marks. A second officer was more understanding.

A month later she was seeing a psychiatrist. She underwent an abortion just in case she was pregnant by the rapists—but the child could have been from her husband. The psychiatrist was not sympathetic.

She quit her job. She moved to another state. Her parents were never told. It was the most horrifying experience she ever had. Stigma.

Case 23.

The respondent was abducted by three males. She did not know who they were, but they knew her name and they used the name of her husband. She was blindfolded, driven to a house and gang raped.

This was reported to the police. She waited a long time. When the police finally questioned her, they were harsh. She said, "they treated me as if I was a prostitute." The respondent is Mexican. She feels that her race and class contributed to the police's prejudice.

The respondent suspected her husband of arranging the assault. She had put a halt to one of his drug deals and this was his revenge. She divorced him and aborted his child.

For over a month the respondent was unable to take care of herself or her two year old daughter. Her mother, a trained nurse, stayed with her and did such things as dress her.

The entire neighborhood knew of the incident because the police asked questions and tried to find suspects. The respondent did not speak to her neighbors for some time after that.

A friend convinced her to see a therapist. Her personality changed. She began to dress differently. She gained twenty pounds. Even today, she is afraid to answer her front door. Stigma.

Case 24.

The respondent was asleep, next to her husband, when she was robbed and raped by a man who entered her home through a window. He had a gun

and a knife. Her husband was tied and made to witness his wife's repeated rapes. It lasted over two hours.

This was reported to the police. They treated her kindly and accompanied her to a hospital. The incident was printed in the newspaper informing the entire neighborhood of the details. Her neighbors were very sympathetic.

She needed time to reorient herself. Her daily activities did not change. She felt that her self-concept had improved since she was able to withstand such a tragedy. This was a crisis for her. No Stigma.

#### Case 25.

A masked man robbed and raped the respondent. Her husband was not at home that night.

She reported this to the police and was treated well by them. The hospital was a more degrading experience. She contacted lawyers but the rapist was never caught.

When her husband and close friends were told, they reacted with sympathy and understanding. Her in-laws were embarrassed she said, but no one was critical.

Shortly after the incident she moved, but this was not due to the rape. She began to dress differently, wearing pants more often. There was less contact with men. Sleep was difficult, often she did not sleep until the sun came up. There were times when she would lock herself in the bathroom to feel safe. She was afraid to be alone.

The respondent feels this was a crisis in her life. It took two years to recover from the experience. She participated in group therapy for several months. Her self-concept was damaged for a period of time but now she feels more confident about herself. No Stigma.

Case 26.

The respondent, an American Indian, accepted a ride from a black, male friend of hers. He drove to a secluded spot, locked her in the car and raped her. She was bruised after fighting with him. She was greatly surprised by this attack because she had liked and trusted the assailant as a friend.

Feeling compelled to speak, she told an acquaintance immediately after the attack. The acquaintance was sympathetic. The second person she told was the researcher of this present study.

The rapist and the respondent attended the same school. He told others what had happened. She was subjected to malicious gossip. It was said that she loved it, etc.

For two weeks she lived in isolation. She would not let anyone touch her. She hit the assailant with an ashtray the next time she saw him at school. Soon her normal routine was resumed. Stigma.

Case 27.

The respondent knew the assailant somewhat. She accepted a date from him and was raped on that first date. She struggled with him and had bruises on her arm.

She spoke to her mother, her boyfriend and several female friends. All responded sympathetically. If she left her home, someone was always with her.

The assailant tried to talk to her but she refused to allow it. She did not date other males for a few months.

This was experienced as a crisis for the respondent. She had a negative opinion of herself. She was made to have felt "dirty."

The respondent owns a maze gun and is very careful to lock all doors in her home and car. She is careful of her behavior. No Stigma.

Case 28.

The respondent lived in a college. While walking to school one cold winter day, three males in a car asked her for directions. Since they were going in her direction, she asked if they could give her a lift. Once in the car, they drove off in another direction and gang raped her. They left her by some unknown road where she was forced to hitchhike back towards school. The male who offered her a ride, looked like a student and she related her experience to him. He drove her to the police station. He was very sympathetic.

The police were kind to her. The three men she described were also raping other girls in the area. These rapists were apprehended by the police.

Her mother was told six months after the incident because she wanted a male friend to be a guest in her parent's home and the parents did not approve. She had to explain to them why she needed company on her travel. Her mother was very upset and hurt that she was not told sooner.

No major differences occurred in her behavior. School was closed for a few days of holiday. She was given a period of time to rest and think about what had happened to her. She did not date other males for a long period of time and she distrusted strangers more than ever before. Stigma.

Case 29.

The respondent had an Iranian boyfriend. She invited a friend of his into her apartment. Her intentions were to change clothes and meet

her boyfriend later with this mutual friend. While she was changing, he entered her bedroom and raped her. She could not push him away.

The respondent feels that cultural differences prompted the assault. Since the rapist knew she had a boyfriend and that they were intimate, another sexual contact was not suppose to be offending. She was viewed as a female not deserving respect.

The respondent discontinued dating the original boyfriend because he reacted callously to her situation. He continued to be the good friend of the rapist. Since all three were undergraduates at the same university, they saw each other after that. She was obsessed with revenge.

The respondent told many other students what had happened to her, especially warning other girls to stay away from her assailant. The reaction from these others were mixed. Some were very critical of her, especially male acquaintances.

She began to see a therapist several times a week. She felt all men were beasts, not only the assailant but her boyfriend as well. She continued to go to classes and all else remained the same. Stigma.

#### Case 30.

The respondent was asleep in her apartment when a black man entered through an open window. He robbed and raped her.

This was reported to the police. The police were not kind to her. She looked through photos of males the police had on file. She was asked to identify the assailant through a two-way mirror. Now she was not sure. She took a lie detector test that indicated that she was lying. The doctor who examined her seemed to be bothered. Two weeks after her first visit to the police station, charges were dropped.

Her friends and family were sympathetic towards her. Her mother wondered why she was not told about the assault immediately.

The respondent missed one day of work. Detectives came to her office for further questioning, letting the other employees know that something important had happened. No one said anything to her at the office.

She moved out of her apartment into her parent's home where she felt safe. She could not bare to be by herself, without company. Stigma.

### Case 31.

The respondent accepted a date with a student she did not know well. This was their second date. She agreed to meet him at his dorm on campus. When she went to his room, three of his friends were there. All four raped her—four law students. The other students at the dorm knew what was taking place. There was a lot of excitement. Several other students watched the rapes and a line began to form of students who wanted a turn.

Since the respondent was a student at the same university, she could not help but see her assailants many times after that. She received phone calls where an unidentified male voice would want to know if she had any sexual diseases. She was never free from tension until she left and graduated from school.

Drinking alcohol became a habit; she would have a drink before going to her classes. There was a lot of gossip about her. Some of the males from the assault tried to talk to her but she avoided them.

If the weather reminded her of that day, she would panic. She wanted revenge but never did anything against them. She felt that they would probably beat her if she did anything rash. Her revenge fantasies lasted five years.



Initially, she felt hostility towards men but several months later, she married. Her self-concept changed. She felt dirty and defiled. Her roommate was both sympathetic and supportive. She told no one else for years. Stigma.

#### Case 32.

The respondent was a high school student who found herself being pursued by one of her teachers. He asked her to stay after class, asked for her phone number and asked to see her. She felt unsure but one day she accepted a ride from him after they had had a long talk. He drove to a secluded area and forced her to perform fellatio. She was very sure that if he had owned another car, other than a Volks Wagon, she would have been raped. There was not very much room, but the lack of space saved her from a worse assault.

Her behavior did not change. She did not miss any classes, though this meant seeing the teacher again. He tried to talk to her but she would not listen.

Her mother and other girlfriends were told. All were sympathetic. The girls wanted to know all the details. They were very interested.

This was not considered a crisis for the respondent. Fellatio is a more sensitive act for her than intercourse. No Stigma.

#### Results

19 Cases of Stigma

13 Cases of No Stigma

## APPENDIX B

### RESEARCH TOOL

#### Interview—Open-ended Questions for Discussion

1. Did you report the assault?
  - a- Yes—How were you treated by the police, hospital, lawyers?
  - b- No —Why not?
2. How long did it take you to discuss this with anyone?
3. To whom did you confide this? How did you tell them? How did they react?
  - a- Person\_\_\_\_\_Reaction
  - b- Person\_\_\_\_\_Reaction, etc.
4. To whom didn't you confide this? (Significant others.)
5. Did any outward changes occur after the assault? Such as:
  - a- Moving
  - b- Change of school or job
  - c- Keeping away from certain places
  - d- Staying at home after dark
  - e- Obtaining a weapon, etc.
6. How did you feel immediately after the attack? Later, now? Was there a readjustment period? Was this a crisis?
7. Has your attitude towards men changed or certain kinds of men? Towards strangers? Is there a lack of trust towards others?
8. Did your self-concept undergo a change? Did someone say anything to make you think of yourself differently? Did you hear yourself being criticized by others?
9. If you have children or plan to have them, what will you tell them about meeting strange men?
10. Before the assault, did you ever think something like this could have happened to you? Did you in anyway prepare for the assault ahead of time?

11. If you can put it into one word or phrase, what is your reaction to the whole experience?
12. What is your opinion about some of the supposed "myths" of rape?
  - a- Women say no when they really mean yes
  - b- Women are passive and men are dominant
  - c- Women are masochistic
  - d- Rapists are sexual maniacs--Do you feel that your assailant was a normal personality type or not?
  - e- Rape can be romantic
13. Did the assailant try to humiliate you? In what way?

Questionnaire—Completed by the Respondents

1. What happened?
  - a- Rape
  - b- Sodomy
  - c- Fellatio
  - d- Cunnilingus
  - e- Attempted rape
  - f- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
2. How old were you at the time? \_\_\_\_\_
3. How long has it been since the attack? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Did you know him?
  - a- Complete stranger
  - b- Acquaintance
  - c- Met that day
  - d- Date
  - e- Boyfriend
  - f- Relative
  - g- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where did it happen?
  - a- Your home
  - b- His home
  - c- Car
  - d- Street
  - e- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Was a weapon used?
  - a- Gun
  - b- Knife
  - c- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. What time did it occur?  
a- Morning  
b- Afternoon  
c- Evening  
d- After 11 p.m. \_\_\_\_\_
8. What state and city of the U.S. did this happen? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Your race is \_\_\_\_\_; his race is \_\_\_\_\_
10. What is your education? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Do you consider yourself having  
a- Equal status  
b- Superior status  
c- Lower status \_\_\_\_\_
12. Approximately, what was his age? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Was he married?  
a- Yes  
b- No  
c- Do not know \_\_\_\_\_

This experience was

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Not Serious	Uncomfortable and Inconvenient		Mildly Hurtful		Hurtful		Most Seriously Hurtful

Mark your reaction along the scale for

- a- Emotional response at the time that it happened
- b- Emotional response today

VITA<sup>2</sup>

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